



Brownfields Assessment Pilots

City of Columbus, GA

BACKGROUND

EPA has selected the City of Columbus for a Brownfields Assessment Pilot. Columbus (population 196,966) is located in west central Georgia, approximately 100 miles southwest of Atlanta. The city has targeted its Enterprise Zone (EZ) for this Pilot. Most of the properties available for redevelopment in the EZ contain old, vacant industrial, commercial, or manufacturing facilities that once supported operations such as dry cleaning, machinery manufacturing, a railroad staging lot, wood treatment, and agrochemical formulation. Many of these properties are interspersed with residential neighborhoods. No comprehensive land use record exists for this distressed area, which has suffered from industrial closures and blight. Businesses and lenders have shunned the EZ industrial corridor in favor of outlying greenfields because of the corridor's degraded appearance, obsolete transportation system, and unknown environmental problems.

Nearly 44,000 residents in the Pilot area have been affected by the industrial decline in their neighborhood. The unemployment rate in the predominately minority neighborhoods in and bordering the EZ is nearly 60 percent higher than the citywide average, and the number of residents living in poverty is about 45 percent higher than the citywide average. Forty-eight percent of the residents living in the target area are minorities.

OBJECTIVES

The city's long-term objective is to facilitate redevelopment in the EZ, thereby creating employment opportunities, strengthening small businesses, enhancing property values, and improving the health and safety of EZ residents. To accomplish this objective, the Pilot will expand existing community involvement approaches in the EZ to encompass brownfields objectives, select target sites, perform environmental site assessments, and prepare cleanup plans for these sites.

PILOT SNAPSHOT



*City of Columbus,
Georgia*

Date of Announcement:
May 2002

Amount: \$ 200,000

Profile: The Pilot targets former industrial properties in the city's Enterprise Zone, one of the city's most economically distressed residential and industrial areas.

Contacts:

Columbus Consolidated Government	Regional Brownfields Team U.S. EPA Region 4
(706)653-4712	(404)562-8661

Visit the EPA Region 4 Brownfields web site at:
<http://www.epa.gov/region4/waste/bf/index.htm>

For further information, including specific Pilot contacts, additional Pilot information, brownfields news and events, and publications and links, visit the EPA Brownfields web site at:
www.epa.gov/brownfields

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Activities planned as part of this Pilot include:

- Reviewing historical and environmental records on industrial development in the EZ;
- Conducting Phase I and II environmental assessments on targeted properties;
- Assessing cleanup options on specific sites;

- Integrating site-specific data into the city's existing geographic information system; and
- Enhancing EZ community involvement to meet the needs of the brownfields project.

The cooperative agreement for this Pilot has not yet been negotiated; therefore, activities described in this fact sheet are subject to change.